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RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0702  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 1030  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY 2932  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2253  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KATHMANDU 003252

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [PTER](#) [MARR](#) [PREF](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR HEARS ABOUT MADHESIS AND MAOISTS IN  
JANAKPUR AND SINDULI

REF: A. KATHMANDU 3175

[1](#)B. KATHMANDU 3217

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Nicholas J. Dean. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) Political leaders, business representatives, student leaders and government officials in Janakpur, southeast of Kathmandu, near the Indian border, expressed concern to the Ambassador over the lack of Madhesi representation in the Government of Nepal (GON) and their disadvantaged economic status. Local residents appeared to misunderstand the rights accorded to Madhesis in the recently enacted Citizenship Rights Act or to consider them insufficient. Janakpur residents also described the growing influence of the Madhesi-based, Maoist-splinter group, the Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha ("The People's Terai Liberation Front" or JTMM). Local officials in Sinduli District, north of Janakpur, claimed good relations with the Maoists and voiced concern over conditions in People's Liberation Army cantonment sites. Officials in both Sinduli and Janakpur criticized Maoist interference with the re-establishment of police posts and said a lack of funds and equipment was also preventing a more robust police presence in the countryside. Maoist control of Village Development Councils (VDCs), the growing presence of the JTMM, and general insecurity were also keeping internally displaced persons (IDPs) from returning home. The Ambassador emphasized U.S. support for the peace process but indicated that Maoist actions had to match their words for the U.S. to take them off the terrorist list.

Madhesi Rights Now

[1](#)2. (C) A consistent message in the Ambassador's meetings on December 14 in Janakpur, in Dhanusa District, southeast of Kathmandu, was the concern over the growing discontent among the Madhesi people in the Terai (Nepal's southern borderland with India). Meetings took place on a day when all businesses were closed and streets were quiet due to a "bandh" (general strike) the JTMM (a violent, Madhesi-based Maoist-splinter group that supports an independent Terai) had called. The recent Citizenship Rights Act, by Janakpur

residents' account, did not adequately address their claims to be represented in the GON or their concerns over the GON's failure to recognize these long-term residents of the Terai. Many officials, business leaders and students appeared uninformed about the recent Act while political party leaders questioned how the Act would be implemented. Student leaders also expressed discontent with the national media's coverage of the Terai and the Madhesi population.

#### A Step Behind: Request for Development

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13. (C) In both Janakpur and in Sinduli, residents stressed the need for development of the region. They cited the growing divide between Kathmandu and the Terai and lamented that education, literacy and infrastructure all lagged behind. Political parties also cited literacy and language concerns, especially at the VDC level, as a complication in preparing for Constituent Assembly elections in the Terai region. With respect to the economy, they noted, Janakpur was the capital of the ancient Mithila kingdom, and its temples still drew crowds of Indian tourists during religious festivals. The city was also home to several industries, but business representatives claimed that a lack of development options plagued Janakpur. A new road project in Sinduli linked the district with the East-West highway and would connect the district with the main highway to Tibet (just outside of Kathmandu) in approximately three years, also providing greater access to Kathmandu. (Note: The road is being built with aid from the Japanese Government. End Note)

#### Re-establishment of Police Posts

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14. (C) Police representatives in Janakpur and Sinduli criticized Maoist interference with the re-establishment of police posts. In Janakpur's outlying Village Development Councils (VDCs) the police had already re-opened 12 posts after consulting with the local Maoist leadership over post locations. Sinduli's Chief of District Police, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Bhupal, claimed an excellent relationship with local Maoists, but admitted that the Maoists had not allowed certain posts to re-open. Sinduli police, army and government officials noted that the working relationship with local Maoist leaders was helped by the fact that the senior local Maoist leader was a resident of Sinduli. DSP Bhupal complained that a lack of resources also hampered his ability to re-open the posts. Although he had requested funds from Kathmandu, he had yet to receive any financial support. Re-opening the posts required communications and other equipment and rental of local housing. Because of inadequate funds, DSP Bhupal stated he had been able to re-open only five posts in Sinduli District.

#### Only the Bare Minimum: Life in the Cantonments

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15. (C) Officials and political party leaders in Sinduli described life in the two Maoist People's Liberation Army (PLA) cantonment sites in the district as barely livable. The camp residents only had the huts that they had assembled themselves, and no drinking water, furnishings, communications or electricity. The Chief District Officer (CDO) of Dhanusha District, Madhava Regmi, was concerned that the conditions in the camps would lead to a humanitarian crisis. Officials in Sinduli and Janakpur confirmed that it did not appear that any Maoist leaders were in the camps and few actual PLA combatants, rather only recent recruits.

#### Internally Displaced Persons: Not Returning to VDCs

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16. (C) Political party members in both Janakpur and in

Sinduli stated that they could return to the villages to campaign. However, they commented, few people who had fled the villages during the insurgency had returned. Concerns remained about the control of the Maoists in the VDCs, the growing presence of the JTMM, and the general lack of security. In a separate meeting with Support Nepal, a USAID-funded NGO working in Janakpur with internally displaced youth, the Ambassador heard that none of the youth planned to return to their VDCs. In a survey conducted by Support Nepal of over 400 internally displaced people in Dhanusha District now living in Janakpur, the district capital, only 28 had returned to their villages. The threat of death upon return to the villages and the destruction of homes were the main reasons given for displacement.

#### Maoist Actions Must Match Promises

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17. (C) Throughout his December 14 to 15 visit to Janakpur and Sinduli, the Ambassador reaffirmed U.S. support for the ongoing peace process but stressed that the U.S. would not remove the Maoist terrorist designation until the Maoists stopped their extortion, abduction and violence. Actions by the Maoists had to match their promises. He emphasized that Maoist adherence to their obligations under the various peace agreements was essential for the peace process to succeed. Political party members and business people alike agreed that the Maoists had yet to comply with their peace obligations. Sinduli officials and political party members claimed that the Maoists had recruited over 700 people from Sinduli and neighboring districts, many of them children aged 13-15, in their most recent forced recruitment drive.

#### Comment

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18. (C) The recently passed Citizenship Rights Act does enfranchise many of the people of the Terai who have lived without rights, in some cases for generations, in Nepal's border region with India. Much will depend, however, on the Act's implementation. There are also other acute development and security issues that the Government of Nepal must attack head on if it is to begin to satisfy the concerns of the Madhesis and deprive the extremist Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha of its support. Regarding the PLA, as the Ambassador heard in a recent trip to Pokhara (west of Kathmandu) interlocutors in both Janakpur and Sinduli raised concerns that the cantonment sites were filled with recent recruits, not seasoned fighters (Ref A). It was also disturbing, though not surprising, to hear in Sinduli that the police had to seek authority from the Maoists to re-establish police posts. Post will continue to work to bolster the confidence and capacity of the police to enforce law and order to check Maoist abuses, encourage the return of IDPs and set the stage for a free and fair Constituent Assembly election in June (Ref B).

DEAN